

In the Claims

No amendments have been made to the claims. The pending claims are included herein below for the Examiner's convenience.

1. (Original) A method of controlling fluid flow in a valve arrangement, the valve arrangement including a valve body having a pressure port, a work port, and a tank port, a solenoid device coupled to the valve body, and a spool operably coupled to the solenoid device, the method comprising:
 - (a) pressurizing the work port by energizing the solenoid device and moving the spool a first distance from a neutral position to a pressurized position;
 - (b) relieving the work port by de-energizing the solenoid device and moving the spool a second distance to a relieving position, the second distance being greater than the first distance, the valve arrangement being configured to provide a first gap for fluid communication between the work port and the tank port when the spool is in the relieving position, the first gap of the valve arrangement having a first cross-sectional area; and
 - (c) moving the spool, without energizing the solenoid device, from the relieving position to the neutral position, the valve arrangement being configured to provide a second gap for fluid communication between the work port and the tank port when the spool is in the neutral position, the second gap of the valve arrangement having a second cross-sectional area, the first cross-sectional area of the first gap being greater than the second cross-sectional area of the second gap.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the first cross-sectional area of the first gap is up to 20 times greater than the second cross-sectional area of the second gap.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the first cross-sectional area of the first gap is about 1.5 to 3.5 times greater than the second cross-sectional area of the second gap.
4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the second cross-sectional area of the second gap is sized and configured to accommodate leakage from the pressure port into the valve arrangement to prevent unwanted pressure buildup within the work port.
5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the valve arrangement includes only one solenoid valve.